

Parents Alerted on Schools Start

The metallic clang of bells that will sound soon to summon all the children back to a new school term—scheduled to start for most of them within a few weeks—is preceded by a clarion call to action for all of their parents.

The "alert" is sounded by educational authorities in all parts of the country, as if with one voice, inspired by another surge in the annually mounting school enrollments.

It is variously estimated that last year's total school enrollments for the nation will climb by approximately two million of with the impact of growth to be felt in every community of the land.

More Continuing Schooling
Hordes of new pupils will pour into classrooms as beginners. Fewer than ever before will be dropped from school rolls this year as teen agers in greater numbers than ever, stimulated by the universal need for better trained adults and by the encouragement of their parents, seek to continue their education in the colleges and universities.

Administrators of our school system are working miracles in advance of the opening of the term, to stretch classrooms and teaching staffs in order to take care of educational requirements that have been expanding more rapidly than the facilities for taking care of them.

Nationwide moves are under way, spearheaded by the National Citizens Committee for the Public Schools, to promote meetings of laymen and educators at community and state wide levels to discuss problems involved in furnishing all the children with the education they need. This is in preparation for a White House conference called by President Eisenhower for Nov. 28th to Dec. 1st.

The Commission has prepared free booklets entitled, "How Can We Discuss School Problems?", available free on request addressed to 2 W. 45th St., New York 36, N. Y.

Preparation More Important
Meanwhile school administrators, pointing to the immediate problem created by the approaching start of the new fall term, declare that because of such factors as classroom shortages and the lack of a sufficient number of teachers, it is more important than ever this year, that parents undertake earlier than ever the task of preparing their children mentally and physically for their return to learning.

More can be done to help children advance along the road of learning during the weeks preceding the opening of school than can usually be accomplished on a hit and miss basis later, in the opinion of many authorities.

It is almost entirely a matter of orientation for the child to be accomplished by doing as well as talking. And this year, significant advances and trends are developing to make the task easier for all the parents.

On the health side is the progress that has been made toward conquering polio, most dreaded of diseases to which school age children are susceptible, with the advent of the Salk vaccine. This step forward is especially welcomed during an era when overcrowding of schools is inevitable.

Trend to Good Grooming
It serves to point up the importance of scheduling physical examinations at the professional level for the children, before school starts in order to allow time for remedial measures if required. Examinations of teeth, hearing and eyes are pre-high school opening musts for which appointments should be made now.

The mounting wave of interest among school children of all ages in better grooming is welcomed also for its importance to character building. The growing trend gives every evidence of banishing the sloppy attire of the past which received their share of the blame for creating difficult behavior and learning problems.

Designers of children's wearing apparel—now on display in the stores—have met the growing demand for career clothes for school children with functional fashions made out of the new easy-to-care-for materials that also are easier on the back to school budget.

A great eagerness on the part of children, to return to school for a new term has been growing apace to help parents

stimulate the proper mental approach. In grade schools the trend is attributed in part to the newer teaching methods which make school more interesting to the children and to the promise of new adventures held by every new school year.

Among high school and college age children, the trend is credited to their growing awareness of the mounting need and preference for better educated and better trained personnel in all walks of life, after schooling is completed.

In both instances the wholesome newer attitudes toward school reflected by children is vastly stimulated by parents themselves, who have learned, to encourage the youngsters to take more interest in their own schooling.

What Parents Can Do
This attitude is best stimulated by concrete evidence on the part of parents of their own enthusiastic interest in the careers of the children, which is learning.

Wise parents begin talking with their children about the return to school well in advance of the opening in terms designed to stimulate the interest of the children.

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